

Noble Eagle, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom. We need to continue to assist these selfless individuals. About 153,000 of them are still mobilized.

At today's hearing on the draft legislation, six Administration officials testified to the overall support of the bill. Craig Duehring, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, stated in his testimony that, "Increasing from 18 months to 24 months the maximum period of employer-provided health care plan coverage that an employee covered by USERRA may elect to continue is an important amendment that will align this coverage period with the length of time for which reservists can be mobilized under the current mobilization authority."

The extension of health care coverage will be especially helpful to federal government employees. Dan Blair, Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management, informed the Committee this morning that, "Last year, we asked agencies how much of the Federal Employees Health Benefits they pay for these reservists. I am pleased to report most agencies pay both shares. Of the 114 agencies surveyed, 96 pay the full premium." The "full premium" means the employer-employee share. The federal government needs to be the model employer when it comes to reserve and Guard members.

With regard to reinstating the reporting requirements for the Department of Labor, Office of Special Counsel, and Department of Justice, all three supported this measure. In fact, Mr. Charles Ciccolella, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Veterans' Employment and Training at the Department of Labor, stated in his testimony that, "In the past, the Department found this requirement to be useful."

With the documented support of the "USERRA Health Care: Coverage Extension Act of 2004," I encourage my colleagues to add their names in support of this timely legislation.

#### ELKINS HIGH SCHOOL'S VARSITY SOFTBALL CHAMPIONS

#### HON. TOM DeLAY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 23, 2004*

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to recognize some special constituents of mine, the members of the Elkins High School varsity softball team from Missouri City, for capping off their perfect 2004 season with the school's first Texas State championship.

To Coach Jim McClanahan, and assistant coaches Jim Smittle and Amy Mattes, thank you for the enormous amount of time and effort you gave to this team and for helping these girls live up to their potential. Without your hard work and dedication, this team could not have gotten where it is today.

And to the team itself—Alyssa Garza, Caryn Danielson, Abbie Palmieri, Amy Palmieri, Brittini Taylor, Courtney Cornett, Erin Howe, Erin Tresselt, Jamie Hinshaw, Jessie Rodriguez, Rachel Isenhower, Ragan Blake, Sam Dyess, Tiffany Williams, Ryan Graybill, Jenna Lamoreux, Shallon Watson, and Ashley Patterson—congratulations! I'm proud to represent you all in the House of Representatives.

While it's pretty clear from their record that there's a lot of talent on this team, you can't win 39 straight games on talent alone. It takes hard work, perseverance, and dedication—virtues this team has exemplified during its stellar season.

It's great to have talent, but it's better to have commitment. As someone once said, "It doesn't matter how good you are if you don't work hard."

These girls set themselves a goal this year and accomplished it. To have gone an entire season without a single loss is an amazing achievement and a testament to the character of these young ladies.

I am honored to enter their names and accomplishments into the RECORD today.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF RITA MORENO

#### HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 23, 2004*

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding performer, actress, and entertainer Rita Moreno for receiving the "nation's highest civilian award recognizing exceptional meritorious service," the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Rita Moreno has been an inspiration to many throughout her remarkable career as an actress on screen and stage. Her performances have been recognized with Grammy, Tony, and Emmy Awards, and she received an Oscar in 1961 for her performance as Anita in *West Side Story*. She has, in fact, been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records for her achievements and being the only female performer to have won all four of the most prestigious performing arts awards. Today, June 23, 2004 she will be honored at a White House ceremony with the presentation of the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

A dramatic actress, singer, dancer, comedienne, Ms. Moreno has portrayed a variety of different roles going beyond traditional limitations and proving that Latino performers are not limited to "ethnic" roles. Her versatility has led to decades of success on stage, screen, and television.

Ms. Moreno was born Rosa Delores Alverio in Humacao, a small town in Puerto Rico. At the age of five years old, she joined her mother in New York and the following year she started her dancing lessons. Rosita's immense talent became evident at a young age. By the age of thirteen, Rita Moreno had made her Broadway debut in *"Skydrift"*. She signed her first movie contract at the age of seventeen.

Ms. Moreno made some thirty films early in her career, and was often typecast as a Mexican spitfire or an Indian maiden. After a decade of these stereotypical roles she was cast as the strong-willed and independent Anita in the movie version of *West Side Story*. It was only after Rita Moreno won an Oscar for her outstanding performance as "Anita", which gained international acclaim, that she was finally recognized as a major talent. Indeed, the film's depiction of ethnic division and urban violence can be seen as a foreshadowing of the civil rights struggles and general social turbulence of subsequent years. Rita Moreno's depiction of a young woman believing in and pursuing the American dream was vivid and memorable.

In the early 1970s Ms. Moreno appeared in children's television programs providing inspiration to Hispanic children, with the intent to assure them of their value as citizens of society. Rita Moreno has also been the guest star on a wide variety of television productions, both here and abroad, including highly regarded educational television programs as well as starring in her own TV series.

Becoming engaged in so many facets of entertainment, Rita Moreno, early in 1978, turned her attention for the first time to live performances, creating an act that has attracted outstanding critical acclaim. All things considered, Rita Moreno's success goes far beyond her ability to act and sing or win awards. She has strived throughout her career to push past the boundaries that have marginalized actors who did not seem to represent mainstream America and cast Latinos and other minorities in menial roles. She continues to keep busy performing concerts across the country as a guest artist with symphony orchestras. In addition to her film, stage, television and concert careers, Ms. Moreno fills her spare time by lecturing to various organizations as well as to university audiences. She is also involved with a number of civic and charitable organizations and events.

Rita Moreno is a member of the Board of Directors of Third World Cinema, a company which is interested in creating opportunities in the film industry for minority groups, and has served as a member of the Board of Directors of the National Foundation for the Arts, the Alvin Ailey Dance Company, the Joffrey Ballet and the Los Angeles Theatre Center, as well as many other worthwhile organizations. Ms. Moreno is currently a member of the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities and a commissioner of the very prestigious Presidential Fellowship Committee.

It is a special honor for me to recognize Rita Moreno and her great work in performing arts and to salute her leadership and achievements.

#### HONORING BRIAN BRADY

#### HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, June 23, 2004*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my constituent Brian Brady who is retiring as Chief of Police of Novato, California. He has served in this capacity since 1992, undertaking many innovative projects in the city and earning the respect of the community.

Educated at Golden Gate University and Sonoma State University, Chief Brady served in several cities in California and New Mexico before coming to Novato in 1982 as Captain of both the Operations and Services and Administration Divisions. With a commitment to the principles of Community Policing, he assisted in the development of the city's first Police Advisory and Review Board and the Multi-Cultural Oversight Committee. A broad community collaboration that involved all officers, including service on boards of directors, Community Policing resulted in constant interactions, constructive dialogues and creation of additional successful programs such as:

School Resource Officers project uses uniformed officers on campus as part of the day